Reflecting on Teaching

In the fall of 1999, Andrea Lebowitz was selected to give one of the President’s Faculty Lectures on Teaching and Learning. Andrea has received both the SFU Excellence in Teaching Award and the national 3M Teaching Award. In her President’s Lecture, Reflecting on Teaching: A Valediction, she reviewed many of the changes that have occurred during the 35 years she has taught at SFU. Excerpts from her Lecture have been reprinted in both SFU Week (February 10, 2000) and University Affairs (June-July 2000). For the record, here are a few of her reflections on teaching:

“As I reflect back on my 35 years of teaching at Simon Fraser University, certain fundamental commitments to students, scholarship and teaching assert themselves as important foundational ideas. I look back to those early days to raise pressing questions that all universities face as we enter the new millennium.

Indeed, to know not only how but why, to understand reasons for things, to discover, to explain, to reveal, to connect for ourselves as well as our students. Surely this is our most fundamental mission. Isn’t it?

I ask this question because I am no longer certain that the answer is an easy yes particularly when applied to our commitment to undergraduate students. Are they still among our main audiences? Has the need to achieve in our own disciplines, to survive professionally, to finance our research shunted undergraduates, in all their diversity, to the periphery?

During the 1980s and 1990s, the pressure of declining resources forced a retrenchment on many fronts as institutions turned away from non-traditional students in the 1980’s and 1990’s. In one way the argument seemed irrefutable. Scarce resources should go to the “best”. Yet the longer I think about this assertion, the more wrong headed it seems. Are academically excellent young students (for that is how best is defined) the only type of student we should be attracting? Does this serve the students who make it in as well as those excluded? What happened to our commitment to the life-long learner? To the disenfranchised or disadvantaged? To the non-traditional student? Are they not still part of our mandate?

SFU was built on notions of excellence in teaching and commitment to non-traditional as well as traditional learners. It fostered innovative teaching and new knowledge and indeed made its reputation on these achievements. As we enter this new millennium I believe that we would be wise to look back in order to go forward, to reaffirm that we are a community of scholars, teachers and learners and that our proudest accomplishment is the educated citizen who will foster learning and knowledge in the future.

Mary Lynn Stewart Elected to Royal Society

We are delighted that Dr. Mary Lynn Stewart has been elected to the Royal Society of Canada. This is the highest honour a scholar in Canada can be given. The Royal Society citation describing her work reads as follows: “Mary Lynn Stewart, Departments of History and Women's Studies, Simon Fraser University, is one of the foremost historians of the Western European welfare state whose work analyzes the lives of working-class men and women in nineteenth and twentieth century France. Her early work significantly increased understanding of political and social activism in the French provinces before and during the Second Republic. Her more recent work focuses on protective legislation. Her pioneering challenge of the prevailing view that these laws protected women and led to universal legislation has contributed to the integration of gender issues and women’s work with more traditional concerns of economics and politics in the study of welfare legislation”.

The Royal Society of Canada is a national academy whose object is the promotion of learning and research in the arts and sciences. It was founded in 1882 by the Governor General of Canada, the Right Honourable the Marquis of Lorne. It is organized into three Academies: 1. Academie des lettres et des sciences humaines de la Societe royale du Canada, 2. Academy of Humanities and Social Sciences of the Royal Society of Canada, and 3. Academy of Science of the Royal Society of Canada. The Royal Society elects distinguished scholars to its membership, awards medals and prizes for excellence in learning and research, organizes annual meetings, publishes proceedings, provides expert advice on matters of national policy, and encourages international exchanges with national academies and promotes the exchange of scholars.
now includes eight faculty, four of whom have joint appointments with other departments; the Ruth Wynn Woodward endowed professor position, and many of stories concern these activities. This is not the first Women’s Studies Newsletter, although it is the first one in some time. In 1993-1994 the department published three editions of SFU Women’s Studies Snapshots which was produced by Suzanne Bastedo. The Women’s Studies program was approved by Senate in July of 1975 and the first undergraduate course was offered in January of 1976. In 1985 an MA program was established. In the early 1990s several joint majors were established, and in 1995 a major in Women’s Studies was established. The department has grown over the years and now includes eight faculty, four of whom hold joint appointments with other departments; the Ruth Wynn Woodward Professor; eight Associate Faculty; and two staff positions. In addition, a number of people teach sessional courses for the department each year. Over 250 students have graduated with undergraduate majors or minors in Women’s Studies and 35 students have received MA degrees in Women’s Studies.

How To Find Us

Interested in more information about Women's Studies at Simon Fraser University? You can visit us on the web at http://www.sfu.ca/womens-studies. If you're on campus you can come to our offices on the fifth floor of the AQ (directly above the East Concourse Cafeteria), the main office is AQ 5102A. Our FAX number is 604-291-5518 and you can reach us by phone at 604-291-3333. You can write to us the old fashioned way at Women's Studies Department, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, BC V5A 1S6. We have a brochure describing all the activities of the department, and more detailed booklets describing undergraduate and graduate programs which can be sent on request.

Women’s Studies Staff Running the Department

The staff in Women's Studies are the people who both keep the department running efficiently and are two of the people you are most likely to talk to or meet if you call or come to the department.

Billie Korstrom, the Departmental Assistant, manages the budgets for the department and the Ruth Wynn Woodward endowment, advises Women's Studies majors, joint-majors, and minors about their program requirements, works with the Undergraduate Chair on curriculum design and revisions, and provides organizational support for all of our community events.

Christine Goodman, the Receptionist/Department Secretary/Chair’s Secretary and Graduate Secretary, handles inquiries about the department, keeps departmental files, designs posters for public events, designs the layout for this newsletter, processes book orders, outlines, and library reserves for all undergraduate and graduate courses, and works with the Graduate Chair and graduate students to insure their successful process through the MA program.

Congratulations to...

Marjorie Cohen who was awarded one of three Dean's Medals in the Faculty of Arts in recognition of academic excellence in teaching, research and service.

Amber Dean, an incoming MA student in Women's Studies, who won the C.D. Nelson fellowship and the Arthur and Ancie Fouks Graduate Entrance Award in Public Service

Cara Goldberg who received the Evelyn Lett Scholarship in recognition of her academic excellence in pursuing her Bachelor of Arts with a major in Psychology, a minor in Women's Studies, and participation in the Co-op program.

Sanzida Habib who received the Maggie Benston bursary and an SFU Graduate Fellowship.

Rizwana Jiwa who received an SFU Graduate Fellowship.

Andrea Lebowitz whose book, Gilean Douglas: Writing Nature Finding Home (Co-authored with Gillian Milton) was nominated for the Hubert Evans BC Book Award for non-fiction.

Marilyn MacDonald who won an award from the Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences for her course proposal, Women, Creativity, and Science Fiction: Feminist Explorations of the Relationship between Science and Religion.

Jamie McGough who was awarded the Grace McInnis Entrance Award and an SFU Graduate Fellowship.

Sarah Turner who received an NSERC fellowship to pursue her graduate work in primatology. Sarah was a Women’s Studies major and she is the first Women's Studies student to win an NSERC fellowship. She was also nominated by the department for a Dean’s Convocation Medal.

New WS Resources at the Bennett Library

Habiba Zaman
WS Library Representative

Women's Studies recently subscribed to the following new journals: European Journal of Women's Studies, Gender and Development, Women and Language, and Action Now. Thanks to Carole Goldsmith and Maninder Bubber of Bennett Library for their extra efforts for arranging online subscription to Contemporary Women's Issues (CWI), a full text database for Women's Studies research. Contemporary Women's Issues is accessible on the library homepage (http://www.lib.sfu.ca) under the "Find Articles" choice. CWI is a multi-disciplinary, full text database, with relevant content from over 200 international organizations and publishers.
How does one connect the academic dots between the population dynamics of a crucifer, and the gendered implications of scientific and religious concerns about creativity? It can start with something as simple as workshops on science for the people, or as benign as searching for common ground. I never would have predicted in 1992 that my interest in feminist critiques of science and technology, particularly in the context of ecofeminism, would have anything much to do with the Centre for Theology and Natural Sciences (CTNS) in Berkeley, California, and its program, an international competition for the development of post secondary courses which explore the dialogue between science and religion. Never underestimate the power of the search for a teachable moment.

Several years ago I taught a course, Women, Creativity, and Science Fiction, and in this process found that concerns about scientific creativity were closely linked with concerns about religious understandings of that creativity. Moreover, feminist critiques of science and religion both complemented and conflicted with each other in ways which suggested that their interaction deserved a more in-depth study. During my recent sabbatical I was awarded a fellowship at the Centre for Studies of Religion and Society (CSRS) at the University of Victoria. Here I had the opportunity to explore the interactions between feminist critiques of science and religion. My colleagues at CSRS told me about the CTNS competition for courses exploring the interactions between natural sciences and religions. I must admit, in my initial debates about whether such a program would even consider feminist critiques, that it helped to know that Dr. Hannah Gay, an Associate Faculty in Women's Studies, had been successful in a previous competition.

To make a long story short, I entered the CTNS competition with my course design, Women, Creativity and Science Fiction: Feminist Explorations of the Relationship between Science and Religion, and won. As an award winner, I attended a workshop which brought together faculty from all over the world with a range in disciplinary backgrounds. In addition, there is a $10,000 US award, half of which supports offering the course, and the other half supports my research in this area.

**Women's Studies and Primatology**
Sarah Turner

Last summer I spend a month studying a troop of macaques on Awaji Island in Japan. My directed research project on behaviors surrounding disability in the monkey population allowed me to complete the requirements for a BA in Women's Studies. Now, when I describe plans for graduate work in primatology, Women's Studies does not often leap into peoples’ minds as a corresponding major. Although macaques are not women and it is not useful to apply feminist theories of human societies to monkeys, as with most areas of study, I have found that there is not a clear line separating my upcoming research and my studies over the last five years at SFU.

Critical thinking and questioning are fundamental to any area of research. The questions I hope to explore in primatology, specifically around maternal care for disabled infants, have sprung from discussions of sex, gender and disability in women's studies classes. Feminism and the questions raised by feminists in Women's Studies also inform the writings and work of many of excellent primatologists, behavioral ecologists and evolutionary thinkers whose work I find inspiring.

There are human components of primate research where a Women's Studies background is useful as well. Most primate species are threatened by human-caused habitat loss and environmental degradation, and it will take work from many different fields to solve these problems. I value the interdisciplinarity inherent in Women's Studies, and the tools I've gained for understanding the human social context affecting the macaques and other non-human primates. My Women's Studies classes have given me skills and a unique perspective to bring to my research in primatology.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO WOMEN’S STUDIES GRADUATES**

The following students convocated in October 1999 and June 2000 with degrees in Women's Studies.

**Women's Studies Major**

Marion Joy Agon, Sandeep Atwal, Angeline Nicole Basset, Ednoi Boun, Sun Hwa Choung, Shannon Tanya Ferguson, Catherine Margaret Homoky, Ngoc Tu Huynh, Angela Marie Kayira, Marie Chantel Marcotte, Ken Okada, Chantel Marjorie Ruel, Kristina Ann Spring, Sarah Elizabeth Turner, and Julia Octavia Zischka

**Joint Major Women's Studies and English**

Nicole Francoise Chaple

**Joint Major Women's Studies and Psychology**

Rina Joy Sioson

**Joint Major Women's Studies and Political Science**

**Joint Major Women's Studies and Sociology/Anthropology**

? which Joint majors: Jennifer Lynn Vornbrock, Janet Ilin Mou, and Sanjit Kaur Thindal
**Women's Studies Extended Minor**

Susan Choy and Rachel Sara Erstling

**Women's Studies Minor**

Christine Louise Anderson, Kimberly Anne Elrick, Jaimie Justason (?), Florence Lai, Shauna Catherine Love, Scott David McLaren, Sherry-Lynn Preston, Janis Vivian Rutherford, Barbara Jean Stranack, Gina Irene Tubajon, Sophie Ruth Vayo, and Bevin MacBean Worton

**Co-op Works!**

Paulette Johnston

How many times have you been asked, "But what can you DO with a degree in Women's Studies?" The Women's Studies students who have completed a total of 27 work terms since 1991 as part of the Faculty of Arts Co-op program can answer that question with examples like these:

* organize a Person's Day breakfast for the Legal Education Action Fund (LEAF)
* conduct research for the Ministry of Children and Families
* plan youth-oriented events at the North Shore Women's Centre
* assist with government projects in Ottawa
* complete grant applications and arrange funding for a community festival
* develop an educational tour program for school children at a factory museum
* design a web site and use desktop publishing to produce a brochure series

Just like the interdisciplinary nature of a Women's Studies undergraduate degree, Co-op enables you to try out a variety of employment sectors and jobs in your three or four work terms.

Will it add more time to your degree program? Not much more, when you consider that you may not be planning to attend classes in all three semesters each year. And, the little additional time it takes does pay off in that by the time you graduate, you will have gained experience that not only looks good on your resume, but has given you some direction in terms of where you would like to start your career after graduation. You'll also have a network of contacts to start that job search with.

Information meetings are held in the second week of classes each semester. Notices of this and other information are on our web site at http://www.sfu.ca/coop/arts. Arts Co-op Coordinator Paulette Johnston can be reached at 291-3401 in AQ 6175

**NAC National Conference**

Kait Cooper

Imagine, one big room, 250 feminists from across Canada, a plethora of diversity. All of us are laughing, debating, learning, and bonding with each other. This was my experience at the AGM of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women in Ottawa this past May. For four days and five nights I was tucked away in the Crown Plaza Hotel ballroom, actively participating in goal setting and organizational development for this group that has been important to feminist movements in both Canada and abroad.

There were a number of significant accomplishments at this year's AGM. The first Terri Brown, from the Aboriginal Women’s Action Network, was elected and is the first aboriginal woman president of NAC. As well, permanent positions were established on the executive for both a lesbian woman and a young woman (under 30), which will hopefully increase the representation of these marginal groups. An update on the World March of Women 2000 inspired the audience through hearing the stories of women in remote areas of both Canada and the world who are doing what they can to support and participate in this event. Additionally, the launching of NAC's annual research project 'From Local to Global' sparked a wave of interest in women to actively fight the forces of globalization. A variety of work shops were held to examine Macro-economic policy and its effect on immigration, housing, social assistance, healthcare and post secondary education in Canada.

My favorite part of the conference was the Young Women’s Caucus. I have never have I had such brilliant and respectful conversation with so many strangers who soon became friends. We generated a great deal of criticism about the overly adult and rather boring nature of the conference, but more importantly we began the process of strategizing ways to ‘spice up’ the annual general meeting and make it more appealing for young women. One of the main issues we are working on is gathering support for young women who are engaging in direct action activism. As many of us were involved in the successful protests in Seattle or in Windsor, and feel that NAC needs to be seeking alternate means of getting its message out, rather than solely relying on lobbying strategies. If you are interested in getting more involved in the Young Women’s Caucus and NAC, you can get on its list serve by emailing NACYW@mercury.unipission.ca. Once again, I’d like to thank the SFU Women’s Studies Department for sponsoring me to attend this amazing event, and I encourage all women, especially young women to get involved and strategize for our future.

**Women's Studies Orientation**

Each fall the department holds an orientation for Women's Studies students. Usually this is held on the fourth Wednesday in September. In 1999 it was held on September 29 in Halpern Centre. Lunch was provided, information handed out and several people spoke about different aspects of the department including Mary Lynn Stewart, Undergraduate Chair; Andrea Welling, former MA student; Angela Held, Women's Studies Student Union; Billie Korstrom, Departmental Assistant; and Meredith Kimball, Chair. Students had an opportunity to ask questions about the department and to get to know other students and instructors. About 40 students attended the event. If you are a Women's Studies student or thinking about taking a Women's Studies course, you are invited to come to the orientation (in 2000 it will be held September 27). It's a great chance to meet other students, some of the instructors, WS staff, and, of course, enjoy a free lunch. Watch for announcements.

**Information Evening 2000**

On June 5, 2000 the annual SFU Information Evening was held. Information brochures were mailed to students who had been offered admission for 2000-3. Over 1000 students and their parents who attended were able to pick up information and talk with representatives of all SFU departments, faculties, and many other programs as
well, such as Co-op. The Women's Studies table was busy as over 85 people, both students and parents, stopped to visit, ask questions, and pick up information about the Women's Studies department. The two most common questions were: 1) What do you learn in Women's Studies courses? and 2) What kinds of jobs do Women's Studies students get? For answers to both of these questions, see some of the articles in this newsletter and call the department (604-291-3333) and we will send you a copy of our brochure which describes all our various programs as well as some of the jobs our graduates have taken.

TO TRAVEL WITH YOU
By Marusya Bociurkiw

I dreamed you went back to Africa and I followed you
I had no guidebook. I’d lost my passport
Hadn’t learnt the language but didn’t want to lose you
So followed you anyway.

There are things I want to ask but rarely do
In the questions lie continental drifts
Of difference and diaspora
Where one of us might disappear.

Come with me to India and Africa you said that spring
It wasn’t a dream you weren’t joking
It never really occurred to me to go.

But this is the summer your ma has died
I ask questions doggedly across a long August afternoon
I can’t tell where or how your grief has lodged
And I am of the West where talking not silence is a holy cure
I ask questions:
about her about you
about mourning rituals about family
about feelings.

You tell me everything except your feelings
How you mourned for forty days
How you washed her body and hennaed her hands
How you never cried how it’s her smell you miss most of all.

I bring you fragrant sage from Osoyoos
Raspberry jam from Keremeos
Salad and blackberry pie
do what my ma would do to make the hurting go away.
My mother will follow yours someday
I am afraid of losing her I am afraid of losing you
But I wanted to tell you this:
that in my dream I was ready to travel with you
even if I didn’t have the words.

Reprinted with permission from Halfway to the East by Marusya Bociurkiw (Lazarra Press, 1999) Marusya is a sessional instructor in Women’s Studies.

Women’s Studies Sessional Instructors

Sessional instructors form an important part of the Women’s Studies’ teaching program. Over the years many people have taught in the department, either bringing an expertise to the Women’s Studies classroom that is not represented among the regular WS faculty, or teaching a regular course when faculty are on leave. The department advertises regularly throughout the year for sessional instructors. The minimal qualification is usually an MA degree and some teaching experience. If you would like to receive our job advertisements, contact the Departmental Assistant, Billie Korstrom (291-3593 or korstrom@sfu.ca). The following courses were taught by sessional instructors between the fall of 1999 and the summer of 2000:

Marusya Bociurkiw, WMST 412, Women and Film
Rosemary Gagan, WMST 201, Women in Canada 1600-1920; and WMST 202, Women in Canada, 1920 to the Present.
Shari Graydon, WMST 317, Special Topics: Women and the Media
Pega Ren, WMST 310 Special Topics: History of Female Sexualities
Myra Rutherford, WMST 206, Issues in Women’s Health and Health Care
Tatiana Teslenko, WMST 305 Women and Utopias
Betsy Warland, WMST 301 Special Topics: Feminist Writing: Transforming Experience into Story.
Laura Wood, WMST 303 Special Topics: Women and the Law

Both of our first-year courses, Introduction to Women’s Issues in Canada and Introduction to Western Feminisms, have tutorials taught by Teaching Assistants. In addition both of these courses are offered by Correspondence and Tutor Markers in these courses are the main contact students have with SFU. During the past year Kelly Boyd, Ritz Chow, Rizwana Jiwa, Valerie Oglov, Carolyn Porter, and Andrea Welling have worked as either Teaching Assistants or Tutor Markers. Barbara Blakely who wrote the correspondence version of Introduction to Women’s Issues in Canada served as the Supervisor for this course, and Mary Lynn Stewart who wrote the correspondence version of Introduction to Western Feminisms was the Supervisor when this course was offered.

Undergraduate News
Mary Lynn Stewart
Undergraduate Chair

In 1999-2000 the Undergraduate Studies Committee had a busy and productive year. For the first time in the last few years there was active student input into the committee. Special thanks go to Kait Cooper, the Women’s Studies Student Union representative, for her work on the committee. We proposed three new joint majors, with Criminology, History, and Humanities. These proposals, and a proposal to add an entry on the Co-operative Programme in the Women’s Studies Department section of the Calendar, have been passed by FACC, and will be considered by Senate in the fall of 2000. Once they gain Senate approval, all the proposals will be in the 2001-2002 calendar. Students interested in any of the new joint majors should consult with Billie Korstrom (291-3593), the student advisor in Women’s Studies.

Students interested in Women’s Studies Co-op should contact Paulette Johnston (291-3041).

SFU Women’s Centre
Leah Georgia

In 1999-2000 the SFU Women’s Centre continued its work to:
-provide a safe space for all women to celebrate their different experiences
- demand and work for the full participation of all women in society
- actively struggle against all forms of oppression and demand justice
- ensure women have access to women-centered, women-positive resources

With Women's Studies and other SFU Community support the Women's Centre Collective sponsored a Dec. 6th Vigil to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of the National Day of Action to End Violence Against Women. Additionally, International Women's Day, March 8, 2000 was marked by a variety of programming including a reading by author, K. Tulchinsky at the Women's Centre and an SFU contingent at the World March of Women in downtown Vancouver.

The SFU Women's Centre began it's Health Information Project in the summer of 1999. With the support of Women's Studies the Women's Centre has been providing women with information on a myriad of health issues in a variety of formats. Our monthly Health Question and Answer Sessions have been very popular! Women put their questions in a box anonymously and once a month Health and Counselling's Health Educator as well as Women's Centre Staff and Collective members are present to answer the questions in person as well as facilitate dialogue. The information and dialogue is used to make a display in the lounge for women to look at at their leisure. A second health info board covering a variety of health themes over the semester provides more information on health topics of interest to women. Both information boards provide pamphlets for women to take away with them. Topics covered include, pregnancy, mental illness, violence in relationships, sexually transmitted diseases, sexuality and more. We are very grateful to our Health Project Volunteer, Lisa Matthews who has worked tirelessly gathering information and creating displays.

To volunteer at the Women's Centre please call 291-3670 or come by the Women's Centre in TC3013, in the Rotunda just east of the West Mall Complex.

There are many ways to volunteer including the Library and the Collective. You can learn facilitation skills, consensus decision making and work with other women on areas of interest to you!!

**Report from the Women’s Studies Student Union**

Angela Hold

A year in the life of the Women’s Studies Student Union (WSSU) in 500 words or less? Here we go... Student Unions are the fundamental building blocks of the Simon Fraser Student Society. They give students the physical space (in the form of Common Rooms) and financial support to make changes within the Department, the Student Society, the University and in the Community.

Student Unions are quite nebulous things. They are what you make them. In this regard, they challenge us (as Women’s Studies students), to put our politics into practice. Running an effective Student Union requires communication, consensus and compromise. This year, about 6-8 women regularly attended meetings, and here’s what we did with the space and support that students fought so hard to acquire (way back in the 60’s)... For most of the year Kait Cooper was the Student Representative to the Curriculum Committee, Angela Hold and Kate Whitehorn were the Student Representatives to the Department, and Laura Schechter was the Forum Representative. For the first time in a loooong time- women chose to utilize ALL of these avenues of representation. The WSSU was able to grant 3 women travel and conference funding. This allowed women to attend the Angela Y. Davis event, the North American Student Forum, and the National Conference on Refugee Law, Policy and Procedure. Members of the WSSU educated other students about the struggle at UNAM (University in Mexico) which included a postcard and petition campaign, participated in various activities on International Women’s Day, donated funds to the on campus Women’s Centre, and mobilized students for Access 2000— the February 2nd day of action that demanded returned federal funding to post-secondary education. Members of the WSSU have received a great deal of support from professors, TA’s and administrators in the Department. Shortly before the Access 2000 walk-out, the Women’s Studies Department endorsed the campaign and professors were asked to give a few minutes of class time to announce the event and not to punish students who missed class to support the event. This year Women’s Studies students saw the creation of a computer lab/ quiet study area (AQ 5101) and the relocation of the common room (AQ 5090— which we happily share with the Latin American Studies Student Union).

Both of these rooms are located in the Women’s Studies area.

The event of the season was "So Now What?"- an open forum to discuss just what it is that one does with a Women’s Studies degree. Meredith Kimball, Paulette Johnson, Leah Georgia and Andrea Welling all came to share their experiences in finding fulfilling employment. The event was well attended and a good discussion ensued after the presentations. During the annual Student Society elections in March, Women’s Studies students flexed their muscle at the polling booths and elected Whitney Borowko as this year’s Forum Representative. Students, staff and administration can look forward to seeing her in classes, meetings and events on campus. The WSSU hopes to become more active in the next year- we’d love to see some new faces and hear new ideas. Announcements of WSSU meetings are posted on the WSSU e-mail list. If you are not on the email list, or you have any questions about the WSSU, contact Whitney at borowko@intergate.bc.ca

"This University belongs to the students-dig it!"

**GRADUATE NEWS**

**Graduate News**

Andrea Lebowitz,
Graduate Chair

This has been a busy and productive year for graduate studies. A new program for MA study, several successful graduate completions and a cohort of prize winning incoming graduate students are among the highlights.

Three students completed their theses this year. Vera Gamboa, herself a musician, did a study of women in the world of popular music. Shea Pertman studied the construction of female obesity in our culture. Shea is currently studying medicine at UBC. Andrea Welling wrote on women in the organic food world. The abstracts of each of these theses follow this article.

The department introduced a new course intensive stream for completion of an MA. Previously a student had to take four courses and write either a thesis or two extended essays. These options remain in place. Now, however, it is also possible to complete the degree by taking six courses and writing two examinations...
In short both the programs and the people students promises to be a lively and the thesis option. The new cohort of three other students who will undertake students in the course option will join into effect in September 2000.

The first cohort of course intensive students will begin in September. Three students in the course option will join three other students who will undertake the thesis option. The new cohort of students promises to be a lively and diverse group of scholars.

WS MA Theses

Revolution Girl Style Now: Popular Music, Feminism And Revolution Vera Gamboa

As a medium with the capacity for mass communication and dissemination of ideas and messages, popular music is located as a site of revolutionary possibilities. The use of popular music by musicians to articulate revolutionary desire and promote revolutionary endeavours is examined as conducive transformative struggles within society.

Revolution is defined as a process of multiple resistances that expose and challenge the mechanisms of power. The revolutionary process is perpetuated through regenerative and continual eruptions of resistances and that emerge from localized and individual points, but that function as a network of pluralized resistances.

Because the popular music industry predominantly determines the production, distribution, and consumption of popular music on a mass level, the structure and operations of the popular music industry are examined to illustrate how popular music is conformed to the standards and demands of a capitalist economic system. The use of popular music for revolutionary interests versus capital gain is tempered by the relationship to the popular music industry.

The *riot grrrl movement*, as it took form in the early 1990s, is analyzed as partaking in a revolutionary process. A case study of the music, lyrics, performance, and activist tactics of women musicians involved with riot grrrl exemplifies how a community of girls/women engaged in feminist struggles as articulated through the popular music form of punk. *Riot grrrl* deconstructed and resisted paradigmatic gender roles and relations, while calling for a feminist revolution. Through localized and multiple resistances, *riot grrrl* utilized the revolutionary potential of popular music.

Being A Fat Woman In North America: A Theoretical Perspective On Fat Liberation Shea Pertman

‘Fat oppression’ refers to the negative effects of being fat. It includes the effects on an individual’s physical health, psychological and emotional well being and economic status. Medical discourse influences the conventional approach to fat in North America. This approach demands that fat people undergo weight loss by surgery, drugs, diets and therapies which are rarely effective and often exacerbate fat oppression with their harmful physical and emotional side effects. On a societal level, the conventional approach to fat discourages diversity in body shape and size.

In an effort to promote diversity and to provide a framework for fat liberation, this thesis describes two liberatory theoretical approaches and applies them to fat oppression. The first theory is social construction of disability. This theory encourages a person with a disability to view her/his condition as a product of the interaction of the physical realities of the disability with her/his social environment. When applied to fat, it enables fat people to recognize that fatness is a social construct that exists in opposition to a thin norm. It also enables fat people to view difficulties associated with being fat as the product of an anti-fat society.

The second theory that this thesis uses is harm reduction. Harm reduction is a theoretical approach to drug use that encourages drug users to locate the source of the harm they experience and adopt approaches which will reduce the harm associated with their drug use. When applied to fat, harm reduction locates the source of much fat oppression in social expectations. It identifies methods of fat liberation without requiring weight loss.

Ultimately, these theories are combined to create a method of analyzing fat oppression and a prescription for action for fat liberationists. Fat oppression exists as a result of social expectations of body size. Fat liberation is achieved by examining how the harm associated with being fat can be reduced. Together, these theories are promising for making life easier for fat people and for promoting diversity in North American culture.

Feeding Our Communities: A Feminist Perspective On The Challenge Of Organic Food Production For Women In B.C. Andrea Welling

The organic agriculture movement in B.C. emerged during the post-war era in response to some of the human, animal and environmental problems inherent to industrial agriculture and the global agri-food system. As organics became more popular, the movement expanded to include growers, retailers and distributors who were motivated primarily to make a profit in the organic industry rather than for environmental or philosophical reasons. This second stream tends to favor larger-scale export-led commodity production rather than local food self-reliance.

The thirteen B.C. women and men organic growers interviewed for this study, farm in the Fraser Valley and the Okanagan regions on small vegetable/fruit farms with most participants using direct marketing techniques to sell their products. The women growers in the study are defined as feminist environmentalists because they challenge traditional gender roles for women and reject conventional methods of farming. Women were central in the creation of organic organizations within the original movement and continue to provide leadership in the industry. Women are accomplished organic business-persons and many are renowned for their products and services. Nonetheless, these women face obstacles as *women* and *organic farmers* which are primarily political and economic rather than technical to organic growing.

Canadian government policy about organics tends to be weak or non-existent with somewhat greater support from the B.C. government in comparison to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. Both levels of government strongly encourage farmers to concentrate on export-led development rather than local food self-reliance. Public policy options to support
small-scale organic farmers in B.C. are needed to help overcome some of the obstacles facing these farmers. A commitment to support small-scale organic agriculture would provide great food security, more local business activities as well as stronger economies and communities.

Welcome New Graduate Students in Fall, 2000.
Amber Dean, University of Alberta
Claudia Kroehl, Freie Universitat, Frankfurt, Germany (Special Student)
Taryn McCormick, Queens University
Jamie McGough, University of Regina
Amy Skinner, Queens University
Stacy Smithers, York University
Julia Zischka, Simon Fraser University

Upon receipt of j’s letter
By Ritz Chow

you write this letter to me
and what do i do?
the legacy of your mother
etched in black, enjambling
line by line into this
cool spring afternoon.
what do we know
about our bodies anyway,
the way they move and swell
and pain us? there is life,
time on these sheets:
the house you grew up in smaller
than you have ever seen it;
your parents shrinking against
frames of wood; silence growing
despite all the words you toss
across tables, along halls; the deaths,
the births; the way you see them
struggle through bodies, thin-
lipped and voice-smooth. stark
against this shrinking
landscape, your roles
dwarfed by sister, of sister,
of mother-maybe, not-lesbian. you
with your packet of soup mix
and open novel in the kitchen,
holding the chair intently
down as if it would fly,
a magnet towards their grief.
what may i offer you?
each one of us drown
into disappointments. none
of us what our parents expected
yet we manage our lives,
write letters with care.
Reprinted with permission from
Swallowing Clouds: An Anthology of
Chinese-Canadian Poetry edited by
Andy Quan and Jim Wong-chu (Arsenal
Pulp Press, 1999). Ritz is a graduate
student in the Women’s Studies MA
program.

A Non-Linear Career Path
Andrea Welling

When I began university in 1990 as a
Political Science major and Business
minor at the University of Calgary, I was
very focused on becoming a lawyer.
After three co-operative work terms and
one term as a legal researcher, I decided
it was neither the lifestyle nor the
direction I wanted to "change the world".
During my travels to Taiwan, Oman and
Europe, I became more concerned about
globalization, economics and social
justice. With these new experiences in
mind and a strong fusion of women’s
studies courses right at the end of my
degree, I decided I wanted to continue
my research on globalization and
alternatives through a graduate degree in
Women's Studies at Simon Fraser
University.

I worked with Marjorie Griffin Cohen as
my senior supervisor and learned a great
deal more about women and economics,
women in B.C. and globalization. In the
wake of the Multilateral Agreement on
Investment (MAI), I wrote a research
paper about its potential effects on
women in B.C. For my thesis, I wanted
to focus on alternatives to globalization
and chose to interview women organic
farmers in B.C. I critiqued the
conventional food industry, analyzed the
organic food industry and made
suggestions to both levels of government
about how to support more women
organic farmers as small business
persons.

With my degree behind me, I am now
working to put my academic theory of
alternatives into practice. I am one of
three partners in a small business called
Ladybug Organics (604-825-8621 or
www.ladybugorganics.com). We are an
organic food and grocery box delivery
service in the Fraser Valley. I never
thought I would use skills from my
Business minor but now that I’ve become
our bookkeeper and financial analyst I
am relieved to know how to read income
statements and balance sheets! With over
75 customers receiving weekly deliveries,
it is certainly a full-time job.

I’ve also just finished the spring semester
as a tutorial assistant for Women’s
Studies 101- An Introduction to Women's
Issues in Canada. I want to continue
teaching whenever possible since I love
students and debating issues in the
classroom. While my non-linear working
and study path might seem unusual, I
think that most women’s studies
graduates will pull experiences from their
diverse academic lives and personal
experiences. Once they enter the working
and business world, all those skills come
in handy, especially if you are trying to
change the world and make it a better
place.

My Career Path, So Far
Sarah Dench

In 1990 I finished my MA in Women’s
Studies focusing on women and
engineering. I was then faced with
finding an answer to that perennial
question asked of me by family and
friends, “So what do you do with a
degree in Women’s Studies?”.

The first thing I did was work for the
Simon Fraser Student Society as the
Ombudsperson. As a grad student, I had
been very involved in the (then newly
formed) WS Graduate Caucus and the
Graduate Issues Committee. My
experiences with these groups, my
understanding of the inequalities
embedded in institutional power
structures, and my natural proclivity to
offer free advice about other people’s
problems made for a comfortable fit in
this work.

In 1991 I left SFU for that other
university across town. The Women
Students’ Office at UBC was looking for
a feminist with a combination of skills to
work with individual women students,
with Faculties and Departments, and to
help develop programs that created a
welcoming and supportive environment
for women students.

During my 9 years at UBC, I had the
opportunity to work with the Faculty of
Applied Science on issues relating to the
recruitment and retention of women
students (my MA thesis topic). I also worked with the Faculty of Graduate Studies on a survey of the “campus climate” for graduate students, and I was very involved in programs educating the campus community about issues of safety on campus (including acquaintance sexual assault). I worked with many individual women students, facilitating their complaints and appeals to the university, and sometimes just providing moral support.

I also had the opportunity to take an eight month secondment to work with Dr. Maria Klawe, who was then the VP, Student and Academic Services, and during that time I created and edited a guide on student rights and responsibilities. I spent a couple of terms as the Student Services Ombudsperson, and for 3 years, I was also the President of the Association of Administrative and Professional Staff at UBC, which is the very large and active bargaining unit representing management and professional staff there.

Now I have returned to SFU, and here I work in Student Services as the Associate Director, Academic Support Services. I will be working on student discipline issues, policy development, editing the Calendar, and coordinating the business of several Senate Committees. And given my track record, I will probably find one or two other things to get involved in.

So, if anyone should ask, that’s what you do with a degree in Women’s Studies.

FACULTY RESEARCH

Making Connections with Feminist Scholars in Australia
Marjorie Griffin Cohen

While on administrative leave this academic year, I spent three and a half months in Adelaide, Australia as a visiting scholar at the Hawke Research Institute at the University of South Australia and also in the Department of Labour Studies at Adelaide University. During my time there I was able to complete two research projects and gave a number of talks to academic and trade union groups. I also made many valuable links with other researchers that may be specifically interesting to Women’s Studies at SFU.

One extremely important connection made was with Dr. Alison MacKinnon, Director of the Hawke Institute. She is a feminist who is very interested in inviting feminist scholars to undertake research at the institute. There are some research fellowships available for anyone who may want to go there for a short or longer period of time. Also Professor MacKinnon is working on issues related to population policies and globalization. She and I hope to be able to design a joint research project in this area in the near future.

Dr. Rhonda Sharp, director of the Centre for Gender Studies at the University of South Australia, plans to become a visiting scholar in Women’s Studies at SFU in the Spring 2001. She is a feminist economist who is currently the president of the International Association of Feminist Economists. Her current research focuses on “Gender Budgets,” with a specific focus on their implementation in less developed countries.

**Two New Books by Women’s Studies Faculty**

**Andrea Lebowitz,** *Gilean Douglas: Writing Nature/ Finding Home.* (Victoria: Sono Nis Press, 1999)

Andrea Lebowitz, a member of the Department of Women’s Studies, and Gillian Milton recently published a biography of the Canadian environmentalist, feminist, nature writer and farmer, Gilean Douglas. Born in 1900 in Toronto, Douglas’ life spanned a country and a century. She found home on Cortes Island, BC where she lived in a small cabin on Uganda Passage. From this base she wrote many of her works of poetry and nature writing. Douglas died on October 31, 1993.

The biography includes selections from Douglas’ writing as well as Lebowitz and Milton’s investigation of her life. In the June edition of *Focus on Women,* Cherie Thiessen writes: “This is really one of the most enjoyable biographies I’ve read. Both of the writers show respect and neutrality as they present Gilean’s life, writings and photographs, allowing the manuscript to tell its own story…. It spans history and society’s changing values. It reveals the faith in nature that allowed a unique woman to live with spiritual integrity.”

**Mary Lynn Stewart,** *For Health and Beauty: Physical Culture for Frenchwomen, 1880s-1930s* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, December 2000).

In late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century France the idea of women’s “physical culture” emerged, promising health and beauty, but also seeking to promote fertility in a period of declining population. Going beyond the simple argument that women’s bodily standards and practices were altered by such cultural disciplines as education, medicine, journalism, and advertising, Mary Lynn Stewart argues that these disciplines needed to change their own messages in their attempts to persuade women. As Stewart demonstrates, internal contradictions in the experts’ advice, especially concerning issues of sexuality and reproduction, failed to persuade women to follow all of their counsel—particularly the most persistent advice, which was to have more children.

In Health and Beauty, Stewart reviews the new scientific and medical attention to women’s bodies during the Third Republic and traces the growing emphasis on women’s private hygiene as the basis for public hygiene. She then examines compulsory education in hygiene and gymnastics, the flourishing genre of women’s medical and sexual self-help literature, and the commercialization of health, beauty, and fitness products—all contributing to new scientific and commercial representations of the female body. In both the scientific and popular works, including women’s autobiographical writings, bodily ideals changed from rounded, plump figures to straighter, slimmer contours, and from relatively immobile to relatively active bodies.

**Faculty Research Interests**

Below are brief descriptions by each of the regular faculty in Women’s Studies of their ongoing research projects.

**Marjorie Cohen:** Two specific and immediate projects I am working on deal with the World Trade Organization: 1) One that I am just beginning has a working title: “Future Tense: What Women Should Fear from Negotiations on Services in the WTO.” The focus here will be the current negotiations on the General Agreement on Trade in Services and the ways in which these negotiations will critically undermine public education and health care; and 2) The other research that I have begun deals with the problems inherent in trying to include labour and
environmental legislation in existing international trade legislation.

**Meredith Kimball:** I am working on a long term project on the history of women in psychology and psychoanalysis. I am continuing my work on Bertha Pappenheim, exploring the feminist implications of her translations of Mary Wollstonecraft’s, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* and Glükel of Hameln’s *Memoirs*. I also plan to explore the work of Mary Whiton Calkins, an early pioneer in the field of psychology.

**Andrea Lebowitz:** Gillian Milton and I are preparing critical re-issues of Douglas’ three works of nature writing, all of which are out of print. In addition to the text, there will be critical and biographical material added to the reprint.

**Jackie Levitin:** Together with Valerie Raoul and Judith Plessis of UBC, I am editing a book that brings together the ideas of critics and the words of guest filmmakers at the successful "Women Filmmakers: Refocussing” conference that SFU and UBC sponsored last year.

**Marilyn MacDonald:** I am finishing the second phase of a study of the incorporation of feminist critiques of science into the teaching, research and community service activities of faculty in Canadian universities (phase 1, Women's Studies; Phase 2, Natural and Applied Sciences). I am also collaborating with Ruby Heap to organize a WS and Science and Engineering portion of an international conference of Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) (Ottawa, 2002); and writing a chapter for a book on women and science and engineering (eds. Ruby Heap, Monique Frize). I am continuing the development of a course on "In whose image? gender and creativity in feminist critiques of science and religion, as explored in women's science fiction", and an ecological critique of ecofeminist theory.

**Mary Lynn Stewart:** As part of my larger research project entitled "Fabricating Meaning: Clothing French Women Between the Two World Wars," I am working on three papers that will also form the bases of chapters in the proposed book. I have just finished an article on corsets called "Slimming the Female Body: Girdles or Gym in Interwar France" for the journal Fashion Theory and I am revising a paper on designers' responses to illegal copying (or pirating) of their designs in the interwar, based largely on patent and commercial law records, which will be submitted to a journal, probably of business history this summer. Meanwhile, I have been gathering information for a third paper on the relationship between fabrics and femininity, in which I explore the how manufacturers and marketers redefined fabrics previously considered either masculine or lower class (like jersey and tweeds) as feminine and chic during the difficult period of the First World War and the "Annees Folles" (1920s).

**Sue Wendell:** I have been studying further the ethics and politics of psychosomatic medicine, especially the influence of gender, race and class on psychosomatic diagnosis. I am also writing a philosophical analysis of current causal theories of psychosomatic illness (theories of mind-body interaction) and the implications of those theories for diagnosis and treatment of physical symptoms, especially in women. I anticipate that this work will eventually result in a book on psychosomatic medicine.

**Habiba Zaman:** I am pursuing projects in the following areas: women, work and globalization, feminists research methods, gender and development, women of colour/immigrant women and grassroots organizations in Canada, the feminization of migration/poverty and third world, especially Asia.

### Faculty Research Grants

**Marjorie Griffin Cohen and Habiba Zaman** are involved in a 5-year, $1.4-million dollar Major Collaborative Research Initiative (MCRI) grant which focuses on a multi-nation research project, *Neo-Liberal Globalism and Its Challengers: Sustainability in the Semi-periphery*. A total of eighteen researchers from Canada, Mexico, Norway and Australia will work together to develop research projects to examine the economic, ecological, political and social sustainability of globalism. Marjorie will be heading the team on economic and ecological sustainability. Part of the grant will be used to fund the research of Ph.D. and M.A. students at SFU who will be working on issues related to globalism.

**Jacqueline Levitin:** Since last year, I have been working with a great team of researchers headed by Dara Culhane, of the Sociology and Anthropology Department at SFU, on a SSHRC Strategic Grant documenting the effects of good and safe housing on the lives of women in the Downtown Eastside. About ten years ago, the Bridge Housing Society, composed of community workers and DTES activists, began to search for funds to construct a residence dedicated to house women. That building is now going up at the corner of Cordova and Columbia. The DTES Women's Centre will occupy the main floor. Our research group, in partnership with the Bridge Housing Society and the Women's Centre is involved, where possible, in facilitating the process. Over a three year period, we will involve ourselves with the Bridge Board, the staff (when hired), and the residents, themselves. I am the research team’s videographer. With the help of researchers, organizers and residents, I hope to produce a video document on the project.

**Habiba Zaman** won a SSHRC Small Grant in January 2000 for her project titled *Paid Work and the Socio-Political Consciousness of Women Workers: Reshaping the Women's Movement in Bangladesh*. The research intends to investigate the women's entry into waged employment in Bangladesh and the resulting changes in their social/political actions and consciousness. It focuses on women's work, social networks, and participation in the social movement in the context of a growing women's movement in Bangladesh.

Below are lists of some of the publications, conference papers, and talks published and presented by the faculty in Women’s Studies throughout the past year.

### Faculty Publications


**Cohen, Marjorie**, and Braid, Kate (Forthcoming). *Training and Equity*
Initiatives on the British Columbia Vancouver Island Highway Project: A Model for Large-Scale Construction Projects, Labor Studies.


Conference Papers and Academic Presentations


Levitin, Jacqueline. "Teaching Women and Film at the End of the Nineties (Using Post-colonial Theory in the Analysis of Women's Films, and Feminist Film Theory to Analyze Non-Western Films)". Film Studies Association of Canada annual meeting, University of Sherbrooke, May 1999.


Community Talks


Women's Studies Advance

On June 9, 2000 the department held a day long Advance. Long ago we adopted a position that we did not 'retreat', we 'advanced', thus all of our planning events are called advances. Sixteen people representing faculty, associate faculty, staff, sessional instructors, and a student representative attended the day long event held in the gazebo behind Hart House at Burnaby Lake.

The main item of discussion was the Three Year Plan for the department. Discussion centered on a number of issues, including faculty renewal, the undergraduate program, the graduate program, publicity for the department, and the department constitution. Faculty renewal is a particularly important issue now because the age distribution of regular faculty is concentrated in the 55-60 year old range. Thus in the not-to-distant future, the majority of faculty will retire in a period of two years. Thus it is crucial to hire some junior faculty in the near future so that there will be a group of experienced faculty to engage in hiring the next generation of scholars in Women's Studies at SFU. The discussion of the undergraduate program centered around the possibility of developing a gender studies program as an undergraduate certificate or minor, and the inclusion of a statement on Women's Studies course outlines affirming the importance the department puts on clarity of thought and expression and good writing in all of our courses. The graduate program discussion focused on the importance and practical aspects of offering stand alone graduate courses, and the possible development of a joint PhD program with UBC. The department constitution was last revised in 1992. Since that time many of the practices of the department have been modified. So our last item of business at the Advance was to discuss modifications to the Constitution. A new constitution reflecting these changes will be brought forward to the Department this coming fall.

Although the weather was typical of June, i.e., chilly and wet, there was also time for walking through parts of Burnaby Park and along the lake at lunch time, and several breaks with coffee and goodies for socializing and catching up on news. We worked hard and got a lot done.

RUTH WYNN WOODWARD

PROFESSOR

Dionne Brand New RWWP

In September 2000 Dionne Brand joins the Women's Studies Department for a two year term as the Ruth Wynn Woodward Professor (RWWP). Dionne is a well-known Canadian writer with a national and international reputation. Since 1978 she has published seven books of poetry, two novels, two books of essays, one book of short stories, and three works of non-fiction. Her book of poetry, No Language is Neutral, was nominated for both the Governor General Award for Poetry and the Trillium Award in 1990. In 1996 her novel, In Another Place, Not Here, was nominated for the Trillium Award and the Chapters/Books in Canada First Novel Award. In 1997 her book of poetry, Land To Light On, won both the Governor General Award for Poetry and the Trillium Award. Dionne is the eighth RWWP. She succeeds Dr. Sunera Thobani who has served as the RWWP since 1996.

We are delighted that she will join the Women's Studies Department for two years as the RWWP. One major aspect of her community outreach will be a writers’ series which we are all looking forward to very much. Watch for announcements. She also will give a talk for Women's History month in October 2000.

Farewell to Sunera

After four very successful years as the Ruth Wynn Woodward Professor (RWWP), Dr. Sunera Thobani finished her term in August 2000. Sunera came to the department with an outstanding reputation as a community activist.

During her time with us, she continued to excel in this area, giving over 300 talks to various community groups. Two major events she planned and carried out were the Women's APEC conference in November 1997, and the first Women's Studies Summer Institute with Vandana Sheva in 1998. She also taught Women's Studies courses to much acclaim and added significantly to her academic publications in the area of Canadian immigration policy. We are pleased that she has found a permanent position at the University of British Columbia in Women's Studies and the Centre for Research on Women's Studies and Gender Relations.

RWWP Events

An important part of the mandate of the Ruth Wynn Woodward Professor (RWWP) is community outreach. During the last year Dr. Sunera Thobani has been involved in two major community events. Last fall she worked with Diverse Women For Diversity to organize the Women's Gathering of non-governmental organizations during the World Trade Organization Summit in Seattle, Washington. This even featured speakers from Latin America and Asia who addressed the threats of biopiracy to human survival, stressed the role of women in preserving biodiversity, and made links between struggles for food security and women's rights. A number of women's groups presented performance pieces on the themes of the conference, including the Basmati Action Group and a troupe of Odissi dancers from Evergreen State College. Participants were served a vegetarian meal of organic food grown by local farmers. More than 70 people attended the event.

This spring Sunera worked with the Burnaby Multicultural Society to organize a conference, Canada in Denial: Socially Admissible Forms of Racism which was held on March 22, 2000 to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Racism. Approximately 100 people attended, representing immigrant service agencies, feminist, and anti-racist organizations in the lower mainland. Speakers addressed the topics of Aboriginal women's struggles for self-determination, the prevalence of racist violence in British Columbia, and of the struggles of people of colour for racial equality in Canada. This conference provided a valuable forum for service providers and activists to work together in developing strategies to counter the growing tide of intolerance and racism in British Columbia.

Sunera also spoke at and participated in a number of local community events during the fall and spring. These included participating in a working meeting on Violence Against Women, sponsored by Vancouver Rape Relief; a panel presentation at the Public Education Forum on Refugees, sponsored by Direct Action Against Refugee
Exploitation (DARE) and the Vancouver Association of Chinese-Canadians; the keynote address at the Public Forum on the Politics of Canadian Immigration sponsored by the Coalition for the Rights of Immigration and Refugees; a presentation at the plenary session of Transforming Women's Future, LEAF National Forum; and the keynote address at the Bowen Island Retreat.

Obviously this range of events requires organizational skills and time. The RWWP Assistant, Carolyn Porter who is a graduate student in the WS MA program, and the Departmental Assistant, Billie Korstrom, worked with Sunera on the many RWWP events held throughout the year.

**RWWP Liaison Committee**

In order to help fill the mandate of the Ruth Wynn Woodward (RWWP) endowment to provide community programming, each person holding the RWWP forms a liaison committee which includes women from university and activist communities. From this larger committee smaller groups work to advise the RWWP on specific events. A special thanks goes to those who have worked most closely with the current RWWP, Dr. Sunera Thobani during the past year: Cecilia Diocsin, Philippine Women’s Centre; Barbara Binns, Langara; Yasmin Jamal, Human Resources Development Canada; Yasmin Jiwani, FREDA; Harjit Kaur, WAVAW; Sadie Kuen; Agnes Lui, Status of Women Canada; Prabjhot Parmar, South Surrey/White Rock Women’s Place; Priti Shah; and Zara Suleman.

Other members of the RWWP Liaison Committee are: Cenen Bagon; Fay Blaney, Native Women’s Action Network; Yvonne Brown; Linda Charles, Human Resources Development Canada; Carole Christensen; Gillian Creese, Women’s Studies, UBC; Maura Da Cruz; Michelle Dodds, NAC; Bobbie Dosanjh, India Mahala Society; Raminder Dosanjh; Parin Dossa, Sociology/Anthropology, SFU; Noga Gayle, Women’s Studies, Capilano College; Marian Gracias; Florence Hackett; Addy Kgomotlana, African Women’s Association; Sook Chin Kong; Norma Kullonen; Jenny Kwan; Angela McDougall, Battered Women’s Support Services; Adrianna Molina, Surrey/Delta Immigrant Services Society; Patty Moore, Women’s Centre, Langara; Rosabella Prasad; Dana Putnam; Lynn Redenbach; Jo Rekart; Yolanda Ricketts; Shirley Robertson; Wendy Scholfield, Equity Officer, SFU; Esther Shannon, Ministry of Women’s Equality; Surjeet Sidhu; Kavita Singh; Nancy Suda, Human Resources, SFU; Irtath Syed; Janet Taylor; Vasso Vahlas; Begum Vergee, Women Students’ Office; Jin-me Yoon, Contemporary Arts, SFU; and Habiba Zaman, Women’s Studies, SFU.

**COMMUNITY EVENTS**

**Summer Institute with Dorothy Smith**

This year the department was honoured to have Dr. Dorothy Smith lead our second Summer Institute. The evening before the Institute began Dr. Smith gave a public lecture, *Feminism and the University*. In this talk attended by over 100 people, she spoke of the changes she had helped to create over the past 30 years, and the sites of resistance that still needed to be overcome. She answered many questions during the formal session and afterwards informally, and her books were available at the lecture thanks to Women in Print.

The Summer Institute, *Where Do Women Stand? An Exploration of Standpoint Theory through the Work of Dorothy Smith*, was held June 23 and 24. Each day Dr. Smith gave a lecture in the morning and the 50 participants broke into small groups to discuss ideas in the afternoon. In her Friday lecture, *Women’s Standpoint and the Exploration of Institutional Regimes: Politics, Practice and Knowledge*, she discussed her work in the area of ‘Institutional Ethnography’ and illustrated her talk with research projects involving mothers and the school system and a project involving attempts to change police reporting protocols in situations of violence against women. On Saturday her lecture, *Women’s Standpoint and the Society of the Text*, examined the role of the text in the structuring of social institutions. Dr. Sunera Thobani, the Ruth Wynn Woodward Professor, and Nancy Janovicz, a PhD student from the SFU History department, served as group leaders for the afternoon sessions.

More than any other individual, Dorothy Smith has fostered the development of feminist sociology in Canada through her paradigmatic work including *The Everyday World as Problematic: A Feminist Sociology* published in 1987. She is one of the foremost scholars in the area of developing and applying standpoint theories to an analysis of women's lives. Dr. Smith was one of the founders of Women's Studies at the University of British Columbia and until her retirement at the end of June 2000 was the head of the Centre of Women's Studies in Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

**Bowen Island Retreat**

In 1988 the Women's Studies Department held the first bi-annual Women's Studies Retreat for college and university instructors of Women's Studies in BC and the Yukon. In April 2000, the seventh Retreat was held at the CNIB camp on Bowen Island. The Ruth Wynn Woodward Endowment sponsored the event.

As in past years, each college and university in BC was invited to send two delegates who either teach Women's Studies or are planning to develop Women's Studies courses to the Retreat. The day before the Retreat, the BC WS Articulation meetings were held. At the articulation meetings several issues were discussed including transfer credits, how to publicize courses and encourage enrollments, and pedagogical issues in the classroom. Encouraged by Barbara Clague, the liaison between the WS committee and the BC Council on Admissions and Transfer, the group decided to apply for a grant to develop a brochure for high school and college students describing some of the reasons why they might want to take WS courses as a part of their post secondary training. Dawn Currie and Valerie Raoul of UBC agreed to develop the application.

Colleges and universities represented included Douglas College, Selkirk College, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, Simon Fraser University, University of British Columbia, University of Northern British Columbia, and University of Victoria.

At the Retreat, there was a combination of formal and informal programs. Dr. Sunera Thobani, the Ruth Wynn Woodward Professor, gave the Keynote Address, *Women's Studies: Challenges in the New Millennium*. Her commitment to activism as an important part of Women's Studies courses was well received and many questions and much discussion followed her talk. Other sessions were focused on exchanging
evening. shopping, and relaxing in the hot tub each evening.
There was also much socializing, some poetry readings, and Catherine MacDonald’s poem about Bowen is included in this newsletter. There was also much socializing, some shopping, and relaxing in the hot tub each evening.

The next Bowen Island Women's Studies Retreat is scheduled for May 3-5, 2002. If you are interested in more information about it and/or wish to be sure you are mailed information about the next Bowen Island Retreat, you can contact either Billie Korstrom (604-291-3593 or korstrom@sfu.ca) or Meredith Kimball (604-291-5526 or kimball@sfu.ca).

Free Time at Bowen

By the time I saw the Mute swan with white wings bowed barely cruising the Bowen Inlet like a queen I thought for sure I was in Paradise
We had already discovered 3 perfect shops in the village one with a sweater that was meant for me, Georgina said, so I bought it.
We had already checked out the sail boats and dreamed of being rich and every person we met was friendly
We had already had the perfect dinner with the beautiful women in the quaint restaurant where the peach pie was amazing
So, by the time the white swan appeared by the storybook bridge just as the last lip of light kissed the surface....
Well, it was one of those sights that makes me marvel at the width and breadth of some days
So, I thanked all the goddesses in heaven or wherever and just said "Haleluiah! and pass me some more life, please!"

Catherine McDonald, University College of the Fraser Valley

Community College and University College Visiting Scholar Program

This program will would sponsor instructors involved in Women’s Studies programs from the colleges and university colleges in BC and the Yukon to work and study at SFU during the summer. The program will begin in the summer of 2001. Instructor(s) will be sponsored for one month (May, June, or July) during the summer to study and work at SFU. Relocation expenses to and from the lower mainland will be reimbursed, either airfare or $.30 per kilometer. For visiting scholars who are from outside the lower mainland a housing allowance up to $1000 would be provided. If a visiting scholar requires child care, an allowance up to $400 will be provided. A visiting scholar will be provided with computer accounts, a library card, an office or shared office space in the Women’s Studies Department, and a limited photocopy budget.

There will one or more visitors per summer, depending on the budget for the year and other planned programs. There are a number of possibilities. People from the lower mainland are welcome to apply, however, relocation and housing costs will not be covered. If a local visitor incurs extra child care costs because of taking this position, these will be covered up to $400. Because there are lower costs associated with visitors from the Lower Mainland, there is the possibility of several visitors, but in most years there will not be money to sponsor more than one person from outside the lower mainland. However, if institutions are willing to share the relocation, housing, and child care costs, it might be possible for two visitors from an institution to come.

Applications should consist of a short proposal (3-5 pages) and a résumé. The deadline for summer 2001 is November 10, 2000. The proposal should focus either on a research project or a course development project. An individual can apply more than once, but preference will be given to people who had not previously held a visiting scholar position. Preference will be given to community college and university college instructors who are teaching or developing Women’s Studies courses or programs. Others who are teaching courses in other disciplines with a focus on women and women’s issues may apply but will be given a lower priority.

During their time here, each visitor would be asked to conduct a small informal seminar about her topic for interested students and faculty.

Send applications to: Meredith Kimball, Chair, Women’s Studies Department, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby BC V5A 1S6. Questions about the program should be directed to Meredith Kimball by phone or e-mail (604-291-5526 or kimball@sfu.ca).

African Mothers’ Day

Addy Kgomo, who received her MA in Women’s Studies in 1996, and now works as the Coordinator of Services to African Communities at MOSAIC, organized an African Mothers’ Day which was held on May 13 at the Frog Hollow Neighborhood House. The Women’s Studies Ruth Wynn Woodward Endowment was one of the sponsors of this event along with MOASIC, the Ministry of Multiculturalism and Immigration, United Way, African Canadian Association of BC, Multicultural Family Centre, African Women’s Ad-hoc Committee, and the African Frontline Workers’ Network. More than 35 volunteers contributed many services including reception, morning tea, child care, community liaising, catering, transportation, program directors, hall arrangement, and cleaning up.

This was a very successful event with over 200 mothers and children attending. In the morning, information tables were available representing a number of community groups and employment services. During the day African clothes and crafts were available in the Market.

At noon there were presentations by the Honorable Sue Hammel, Minister of Multiculturalism and Immigration, Ms. Holly Whittleton, Executive Director of MOSAIC, and Dr. Meredith Kimball, Chair of Women’s Studies. Ms. Comfort Ero, Ms. Jane Maina, and Ms. Aba...
Hammond read their poems, and Ms. Addy Kgomo introduced the participants.

A buffet lunch with many different entrees was followed by an afternoon of entertainment and information which included a film depicting the political struggles of Winnie Mandela, and presentations and performance in the form of poetry, drumming and dance by children and adults. A performance in honour of their mothers was given by a group of children and youth who attended the event.

**Judy Rebick Speaks**

In support of the World March of Women 2000, Judy Rebick spoke to an audience of 80 people on May 12 at SFU Harbour Centre. This event was organized by the National Action Committee as a fundraising event, and co-sponsored by the Women's Studies Ruth Wynn Woodward Endowment.

Judy Rebick, author, activist, and broadcaster, spoke on *The World March of Women 2000...Global Democracy in Action*. She gave a passionate defense of democracy based on her book, *Imagine Democracy*, and answered many questions from the audience.

**Angela Davis Visits Vancouver**

The Vancouver Status of Women (VSW) invited Angela Davis to Vancouver to speak on February 12 in honour of Black History Month. This fundraising event for VSW was also co-sponsored by Women's Studies Ruth Wynn Woodward Endowment and the Hospital Employees’ Union of BC.

Angela Davis, a major figure in African American, feminist, and prison reform movements since the 1970s spoke from her wealth of experience working for social justice. She answered many questions from the audience after her talk, and gave media interviews and was present at a reception held by VSW before her talk. The event was held at the Vogue Theatre with more than 800 people in attendance.

**Women's History Month**

Each year the Women's Studies Department sponsors one or more events to celebrate Women's History Month. In October 1999, we sponsored three talks about various aspects of women’s lives in historical perspective. The first was given by Dr. Regina Morantz-Sanchez who is a professor of history at the University of Michigan. Her areas of specialization are women’s history, the history of medicine, the history of sexuality, and the family. The title of her talk, *Historical Reflections on the Figure of the Difficult Woman: Mary Dixon Jones on Trial*, was based on her most recent book. The second was given by Makeda Silvera who is a Canadian writer of fiction; the editor of collections of writing by lesbians of colour in Canada, including *Piece of My Heart*, and the author of *Silenced*, a groundbreaking study of Caribbean women doing domestic work in Canada. She spoke on *Writing and Editing Literature of Lesbians of Colour*. Women's History Month was brought to a fine conclusion with the lecture of Dr. Mary Lynn Stewart, faculty member in Women's Studies and History. She treated us to a talk taken from her book, *For Your Health and Beauty: Physical Culture for French Women, 1880s-1930s*, which will be published late in 2000 by Johns Hopkins University Press. Her talk, *Corsets or Gymnastics? Slimming the Female Body in 20th Century France*, complete with slides, generated many questions from the audience.

**Co-sponsored Public Events**

One of the ways in which the Ruth Wynn Woodward Endowment moneys are used to fulfill the mandate of community outreach is through the sponsorship and co-sponsorship of speakers, events, and conferences both on and off campus. From September 1999 through August 2000, the endowment was used to sponsor and co-sponsor 24 speakers and events. Several of the more major events, such as Marilyn Waring's talks, Women's History Month, African Mothers’ Day, Angela Davis's talk, Judy Rebick's talk, and the Summer Institute are described in separate articles throughout this newsletter.

Funds were used to contribute to several public speakers and events sponsored by other groups on and off campus. These included: Elaine Morgan's talk, *Human Evolution: The Water Theory*, co-sponsored with the departments of Archeology, Biological Sciences, and Psychology; the Graduate Liberal Studies Program, The Koerner Foundation, and the Institute for the Humanities. Two public forums were co-sponsored with the Aboriginal Women's Action Network.

**Travelling Speakers' Bureau**

One of the community programs associated with the Ruth Wynn Woodward Endowment is the Travelling Speakers' Bureau. A list of speakers and topics is circulated to women's centers throughout BC and the Yukon. These groups then request a speaker for a local event. When a speaker can be matched up with a local event somewhere in BC or the Yukon, the department pays their air fare and accommodation and the local group handles advertisement and local arrangements. These events are very well received and people are very enthusiastic about speakers travelling to their community rather than their needing to travel to the Lower Mainland. For further information about the Travelling Speakers' Bureau, contact Billie Korstrom, the Women's Studies Departmental Assistant (291-3593 or korstrom@sfu.ca).

The Ruth Wynn Woodward Professor (RWWP) is one of the main participants in this series. In addition faculty and associate faculty in Women's Studies can participate, and sessional instructors in the department may participate after they have taught two courses for the department. When they chose to participate, sessional instructors are sponsored for one out of town trip during a teaching semester.
This year five people participated in the Travelling Speakers' Series. Sunera Thobani, who was the RWWP, participated in a panel on Feminist Perspectives on Social Justice as a part of the 25th anniversary celebrations of the Women's Studies Department at the University of Victoria. She also gave the keynote address at the World Trade Organization Teach-In sponsored by the Labour Studies Program of Evergreen State College in Olympia Washington. Andrea Lebowitz gave talks on Nature Writing for people in Fort St. John, Dawson Creek, and Chetwynd, BC. Jackie Levitin gave a talk on film in Terrace, BC. Myra Rutherford spoke on Women, Gender, and Mission in the Late 19th Century in Northern BC in Fort Nelson, BC. Mary Lynn Stewart spoke in Quesnel on the topic of Female Body Image, and Meredith Kimball spoke in Cranbrook on Women and Aging. Audiences ranged from 20 to 120 people at these various events and a both speakers and audiences were enthusiastic.

**Marilyn Waring Visits SFU**

International Women's Day was celebrated in style this year with the visit of Dr. Marilyn Waring. She visited Vancouver on March 16, 2000, the last stop of her Canadian tour sponsored by the Parkland Institute of Alberta. She gave two talks to enthusiastic audiences of more than 500 people. Her first talk, *Women and Economics*, was held on the Burnaby campus, and her Koerner Lecture, *The Environment*, was given at Robson Square the same evening. She was an inspiring speaker who communicated both a different vision of the world and a way to get there. Students, instructors, and people from the community were attentive, asked questions, and waited in long lines for Dr. Waring to sign their books which were sold at both events by Women In Print.

Dr. Waring is a feminist economist with a PhD in Political Economy, a development consultant, a farmer, an activist for women's rights and is currently a senior lecturer at Massey University, Auckland, New Zealand. In 1975 she was elected to the New Zealand Parliament, making her youngest member ever elected. At the age of 24 she became the Chairperson of the Public Expenditures Committee. During the course of her work she discovered that, world wide, no country's accounting system took into account the work of women and the cost of environmental damage. Her first book, *If Women Counted: The New Feminist Economics*, which was published in 1989 was the first of many of her attempts to change the face of traditional economics. This book had a major impact world wide and was the basis of a Canadian National Film Board production *Who's Counting?*

Dr. Waring's visit to Vancouver was the co-sponsored by a number of organizations in Vancouver including the Women's Studies Ruth Wynn Woodward Endowment, the Koerner Foundation at SFU, the SFU Political Science Department, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, the Centre for Research in Women's Studies and Gender Relations at UBC, and the Council of Canadians.